

REMARKS

By this amendment, Applicants have amended the specification to include a reference to the priority claim under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Application 60/198,818 filed on April 21, 2000. Applicants claimed priority in the transmittal letter included with this application on April 23, 2001, and the domestic priority claim appears on the Official Filing Receipt for this application, a copy of which is attached. Because the priority claim appears on the Filing Receipt, a petition under 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(6) is not required for the entry of this amendment. See 66 Fed. Reg. 67091 (Dec. 28, 2001).

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 4-6, 8-13, 55, 56, 60-66, 68-73, 115-116, 118, 120-122, 126, 128, 130-135, 177, 180, and 182-184 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman, U.S. Patent 5,146,403 and Lockhart et al., Published U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0103697; rejected claims 7, 14-20, 59, 67, 74-80, 119, 129, 136-142, and 181 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman, Lockhart et al., and Tsuei, U.S. Patent 6,654,779; and rejected claims 57, 117, and 179 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman, Lockhart et al., and Salta, Published U.S. Patent Application No. 2001/0037463.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 4-6, 8-13, 55, 56, 60-66, 68-73, 115-116, 118, 120-122, 126, 128, 130-135, 177, 180, and 182-184 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman and Lockhart et al.

Independent claim 4, for example, recites a method for providing an electronic change of address service from an old address of a customer to a new address of the customer. The method includes, among other things, receiving change of address information at a change of address server via a network, validating an identity of the

customer at the change of address server, electronically transferring the change of address information to a service center when the identity is valid, and processing the change of address information received from the service electronically to enable the customer to receive mail addressed to the old address of the customer at the new address of the customer.

Goodman discloses a change of address system including change of address terminals connected to a master service computer as shown in figure 1. The terminals receive and store customized change of address information by the user (col. 2, lines 40-42). The service computer receives the change of address information from the terminals, and the postal service is notified (col. 2, lines 43-48). The master service computer may communicate directly with the postal service, and the postal service computer may communicate with one or more of a group of individual postal service computers to notify local postal authorities of the change in a customer's address (col. 6, lines 57-65). As stated by the Examiner, Goodman fails to disclose validating an identity of the customer.

Lockhart et al. discloses a system for generating and distributing surface mail using a global computer network (0003). A user specifies the contents of an electronic mail file intended for a particular recipient (0022). A mail service computer sends the file to a printing facility (0023), and the mail item is then placed into the surface mail system (0024). In accordance with one aspect of the alleged invention of Lockhart et al., an address-change form is supplied to the user on-line (0091). Information is then suitably validated and transmitted to the post office data center for update (0091).

Even if combinable as suggested by the Examiner, Goodman and Lockhart fail to disclose or suggest the subject matter of claims 4-6, 8-13, 55, 56, 60-66, 68-73, 115-116, 118, 120-122, 126, 128, 130-135, 177, 180, and 182-184. For example, neither Goodman nor Lockhart et al. discloses receiving change of address information via a network and processing the change of address information electronically to enable the customer to receive mail addressed to the old address at the new address. Although Goodman and Lockhart et al. might disclose electronically transferring change of address information, neither reference teaches or suggests electronically processing that change of address information.

As recited in, for example, claim 4, the claimed subject matter includes both receiving change of address information via a network and electronically processing the change of address information to enable the customer to receive mail addressed to the old address at the new address. Such processing requires more than merely transferring information over a network. Goodman and Lockhart et al. apparently contemplate manual processing at, for example, the U.S. Postal Service, to implement the change of address information. Goodman and Lockhart et al., even if combinable as suggested by the Examiner, thus fail to disclose or suggest the claimed subject matter.

In addition, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the change of address terminals disclosed by Goodman with the information validation disclosed by Lockhart et al.

Lockhart et al. rely on "credit card information and address data previously received from the user." Such information, however, may not exist in the public change

of address terminals disclosed by Goodman. In Lockhart et al., repeat users establish accounts with password secured logins (0083) and address books (0086). In Goodman, users access public change of address terminals (col. 2, lines 35-40) and may wish to send a change of address notification during the very first access. In such a case, the information validation of Lockhart et al. cannot work because there is no previously stored information in the public change of address terminal. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to include an information validation requirement using previously submitted information in the change of address terminals of Goodman, because such information may not exist.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 7, 14-20, 59, 67, 74-80, 119, 129, 136-142, and 181 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman, Lockhart et al., and Tsuei. Goodman, Lockhart et al., and Tsuei, even if combinable as suggested by the Examiner, fail to disclose or suggest the claimed subject matter. In addition, there is no motivation in the prior art to combine Tsuei with Goodman and Lockhart as suggested by the Examiner.

Independent claim 14, for example, recites a method for providing an electronic change of address service from an old address of a customer to a new address of the customer. The method includes, among other things, sending identification verification information to a third party for validating the identity of the customer and validating the identity when the third party sends an indication that the identification verification information agrees with stored identification verification information.

Claims 7, 14-20, 59, 67, 74-80, 119, 129, 136-142, and 181 patentably distinguish the disclosures of Goodman and Lockhart et al. as already discussed. In

addition and as recognized by the Examiner, Goodman and Lockhart et al. fail to disclose sending identification verification information to a third party.

The Examiner cites column 10, line 47 to column 11, line 33 of Tsuei. According to the title, Tsuei discloses a system and method for electronic mail address management. Figure 3 of Tsuei shows an e-mail address management system ("EAMS") (col. 6, lines 16-20). An e-mail recipient may register an e-mail address change with the EAMS or an internet service provider ("ISP") may transmit an e-mail address change to the EAMS (col. 10, lines 12-20). "An authenticating authority, such as the authenticating authority 360 in Fig. 3, is preferably employed to provide . . . greater assurance of a valid address change" (col. 11, lines 2-5).

In addition, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine Tsuei with Goodman and Lockhart et al. as suggested by the Examiner. Tsuei discloses an electronic mail management system, while Goodman and Lockhart et al. relate to physical mail delivery. An e-mail address differs from a physical address, and changing an e-mail address differs from changing a physical address. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art designing a system to change an e-mail address would not look to a system to change a physical address, and one of ordinary skill in the art designing a system to change a physical address would not look to a system to change an e-mail address.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 57, 117, and 179 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Goodman, Lockhart et al., and Salta. Claim 57 depends from claim 55; claim 117 depends from claim 115; and claim 179 depends from claim 177. Claims 57, 117, and 179 are thus allowable for at least the reasons already discussed.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 29, 2005

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Attachments: Official Filing Receipt

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APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	GRP ART UNIT	FIL FEE REC'D	ATTY. DOCKET NO	DRAWINGS	TOT CLAIMS	IND CLAIMS
09/839,241	04/23/2001	2131	5982	08049.0765	22	184	32

CONFIRMATION NO. 4011

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RECEIVED

FILING RECEIPT



OC000000006196661

JUN 21 2001

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Date Mailed: 06/18/2001

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Domestic Priority data as claimed by applicant

THIS APPLN CLAIMS BENEFIT OF 60/198,818 04/21/2000

Foreign Applications

If Required, Foreign Filing License Granted 06/18/2001

Projected Publication Date: To Be Determined - pending completion of Missing Parts

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

Title

- Systems and methods for providing change of address services over a network

Preliminary Class

713

Data entry by : ASRAT, FANAYE

Team : OIPE

Date: 06/18/2001

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